

THE NATURE OF THINGS

Forward-looking. Results-oriented. Creative. Sustainable. The new Chesapeake Bay Watershed agreement, which was signed in June in Annapolis, is both responsive and proactive. It is comprised of 10 interrelated goals that are linked to measurable and time-bound outcomes.

As chairman of the Principal Staff Committee, I was proud to help lay the groundwork for this plan that works across jurisdictional boundaries — federal, state and local levels — to reduce pollution entering the Bay and protect living resources and their habitats.

Since the signing of the first Chesapeake Bay Agreement in 1983, our partnership has expanded. Our efforts and priorities have evolved along with our knowledge and experience. New agreements in 1987 and 2000 added more specific goals, commitments and deadlines for water quality, living resources, public access, population growth and development, public information, education and engagement.

When we fell short of our major commitment to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus by 40 percent in 2000, we developed tributary teams and strategies to shift focus to the waters that feed into the Bay — forerunners of our current watershed implementation plans — our blueprints for Bay restoration.

The 2000 agreement celebrated the participation of the headwater states in our water quality commitments. We have benefited from greatly increased participation from these states, as well as local governments, citizens, non-profits and scientists. Science guides our restoration efforts and measures our progress. The 2000 agreement also noted that failure to remove the Bay from the impaired waters list would result in a *Total Maximum Daily Load* — which it did.

The 2010 TMDL and the subsequent presidential executive order led to conversations about a new agreement — one that would better integrate partnership efforts, address emerging challenges, set clearer goals and specific outcomes to measure progress, incorporate the latest science and management techniques, and create greater flexibility and improved accountability for partners.

And here we are.

At the Executive Council meeting in June, we celebrated three decades of hard work and history, and recommitted to the future of our restoration efforts. We signed a new Agreement that holds us accountable for achieving our management strategies — to which Maryland and its partners are fully committed. These strategies will provide for unprecedented levels of transparency, accountability and public engagement.

We also announced \$2.6 million in additional funding for Bay-related projects in Maryland, including \$250,000 in grants to non-profit organizations for infrastructure improvements and community outreach through the Trust Fund.

Additionally, we are partnering with the EPA and Chesapeake Bay Trust to provide an additional \$1.6 million in Watershed Assistance Collaborative funding to help local governments meet their milestones. And because educating our young citizens is possibly the most important thing we can do, again in partnership with the EPA, we will be directing more than \$750,000 over the next three years for teacher professional development to further support our environmental literacy commitments.

Armed with this Agreement and working across federal, state and local levels, we move forward with new energy to restore the Bay. The future is bright.



Kristien Peterson


Joseph P. Gill
Secretary